

SPOKE

Conestoga College, Kitchener

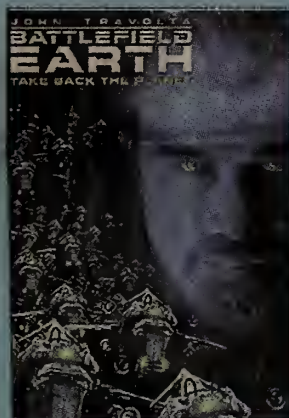
MAY 23, 2000

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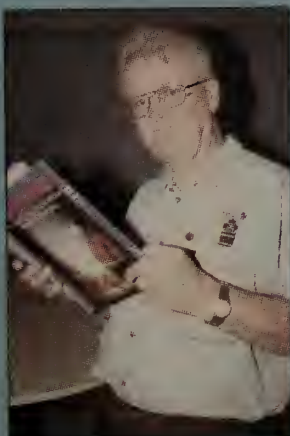
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CSI executive closes meetings

Executive to meet in-camera but board sessions remain open

By Mike Radatus

Conestoga Students Inc., formerly the DSA, has decided to change its executive meetings from open meetings to in-camera sessions.

The decision came after the CSI requested information from Kevin Mullan, the college's vice-president of finance and administrative operations, on common practices of similar executive councils.

"Its normal practice in any organization to hold in-camera meetings," said Mullan. "It's a way to get the information to the board of directors first hand."

Mullan

He said in-camera sessions provide a way to set the agenda for the board of directors so that they find out what is going on at the same point as the public, instead of after.

He also said it was a way for members of the board of directors to know about issues discussed in the executive meeting before they are asked questions about the issue by students.

Jack Fletcher, director of student services and recreation and the college liaison with the CSI, said the major reason for the change was to help communication among the executive members.

"When the executive goes in-camera they have more freedom to say how they feel and discuss issues without worrying about being quoted," he said. "A lot of sub-committees throughout the college go in-camera because they feel restricted with the press there. If anything is going to be passed, it has to be forwarded to the board of directors."

Fletcher said he is supportive of the decision and feels it will make the executive more efficient.

Phil LeBeau, CSI president, said the change will not lessen the amount of information the students receive from the executive because the board of directors meetings will still be open to the public and students are welcome to attend.



LeBeau

He said the board may now also meet twice a month during the regular school year instead of once. The decision will be made at the May 24 meeting at 8 p.m.

"We have an open-door policy. Students can come in and ask questions or tell us about any concerns they have," he said.

He also said that going in-camera would not change the guidelines on how the CSI makes decisions on spending students' money or any other issues concerning students.

He also said the change does not violate the CSI constitution. "Anything that has to do with students has to be brought to the board of directors and voted on. That hasn't changed," said LeBeau.

"When the executive goes in-camera they have more freedom to say how they feel and discuss issues without being quoted."

*Jack Fletcher,
director of student services
and recreation and liaison
with the CSI*

LeBeau said he hasn't heard any complaints from other CSI members about the decision and that the entire executive supports the new executive meeting plan.

He said that the CSI isn't trying to hide anything from students and that the organization is there for the students.

"If you're on the executive for a personal agenda, you shouldn't be there at all. We're all students here," he said.

Bookworm bonanza



Margaret Burnes (second from left) shows off some books to Gerry Parsons (left), Gail Noble (second from right) and Marg Tupling (far right) at the book fair May 9 in the Blue Room cafeteria. See story on page 4.

(Photo by Jes Brown)

Other student councils follow various models

By Mike Radatus

The model the Conestoga Students Inc. executive has changed to is one of several models used by student councils across the province.

Out of 10 community colleges contacted by Spoke, some executives have all meetings in-camera, some have open session and go in-camera at the end of the meeting and others work on a bi-weekly system where one week meetings are open to the public and the next week they are closed.

Colleges whose executive meetings are held in-camera include Northern College in Timmins, Sir Sandford Fleming College in Peterborough, Algonquin College in Nepean, Loyalist College in Belleville, and Fanshawe College in London.

Colleges whose executive meetings are open to the public, but go in-camera at the end of the meeting, include Mohawk College in Hamilton, Lambton College in

Sarnia, Seneca College in North York and Canadore College in North Bay.

Colleges that have executive meetings using the bi-weekly system include Sheridan College in Oakville and Cambrian College in Sudbury.

Other colleges in the province were either unavailable or didn't have a student executive during the summer semester.

Five out of 10 student councils contacted hold all their executive meetings in-camera

Rona Macdonald, director of student life at Canadore College, who is on an executive that holds meetings open to the public, but goes in-camera at the end of the meeting, said she didn't really see a difference between having all executive meetings in-camera or having open meetings before going in-camera.

"It isn't any different really, is it?" she said. "You still address the same issues you would anyway."

The majority of student executives across the province felt in-camera sessions are a good way to resolve problems and get the job done.

of discussion about individual proposals with the colleges.

The money will fund 71 new classrooms and eight labs in health sciences and police, fire and emergency services, as well as in multimedia communications, including journalism and broadcasting.

College gets \$14.2 million in SuperBuild funding

Conestoga College has received \$14.22 million from the province's SuperBuild fund, less than half of the original \$39 million requested.

The announcement was made by Dianne Cunningham, minister of training, colleges and universities, during a press conference at

Conestoga May 18.

Conestoga was bypassed in the first round of SuperBuild funding in March, but resubmitted a scaled-down proposal.

Cunningham attributed the government's failure to initially fund the college to the province's lack

Ontario's 2000 budget is full of empty promises

The provincial government's 2000 budget's promises for universities and colleges are as empty and deceiving as a theme park where you've paid your \$6 to enter and find out there's no clowns, rides or cotton candy.

With bells and whistles and great hoopla, Ernie Eves, Ontario minister of finance, announced that post-secondary institutions in Ontario would have a crack at another round of SuperBuild projects — a billion dollar infrastructure initiative. Students, Eaves promised, would find it easier to attend colleges and universities.

Education Minister Janet Ecker, in a round of talks in Ontario, named this year's education budget "reaching for tomorrow."

While the government reaches for tomorrow, students and post-secondary institutions are still reeling from the government's drastic cuts to education in its first term in office.

According to speeches and figures from the Ontario Liberal party's Web site (www.ontarioliberal.com), whose figures may

An increase in funding to programs, tuition cap and more money to bursaries and scholarships would help lessen the burden on students.

be somewhat exaggerated, what the budget doesn't say is that the Ontario government is spending \$200 million less on operating colleges and universities that it did five years ago. It also fails to mention that Ontario has the highest tuition, with the exception of Nova Scotia, of all the provinces. It

seems to forget that Ontario invests less per student than any of the 10 provinces. Nowhere in the speeches about "reaching for tomorrow" was it said that only Ontario and Quebec have cut their investments in education.

The SuperBuild project, which was first introduced in the 1999 budget, was extolled as a great opportunity for post-secondary institutions to expand. The SuperBuild initiative funds those institutions in high-growth areas that are struggling to keep up with the growing number of students.

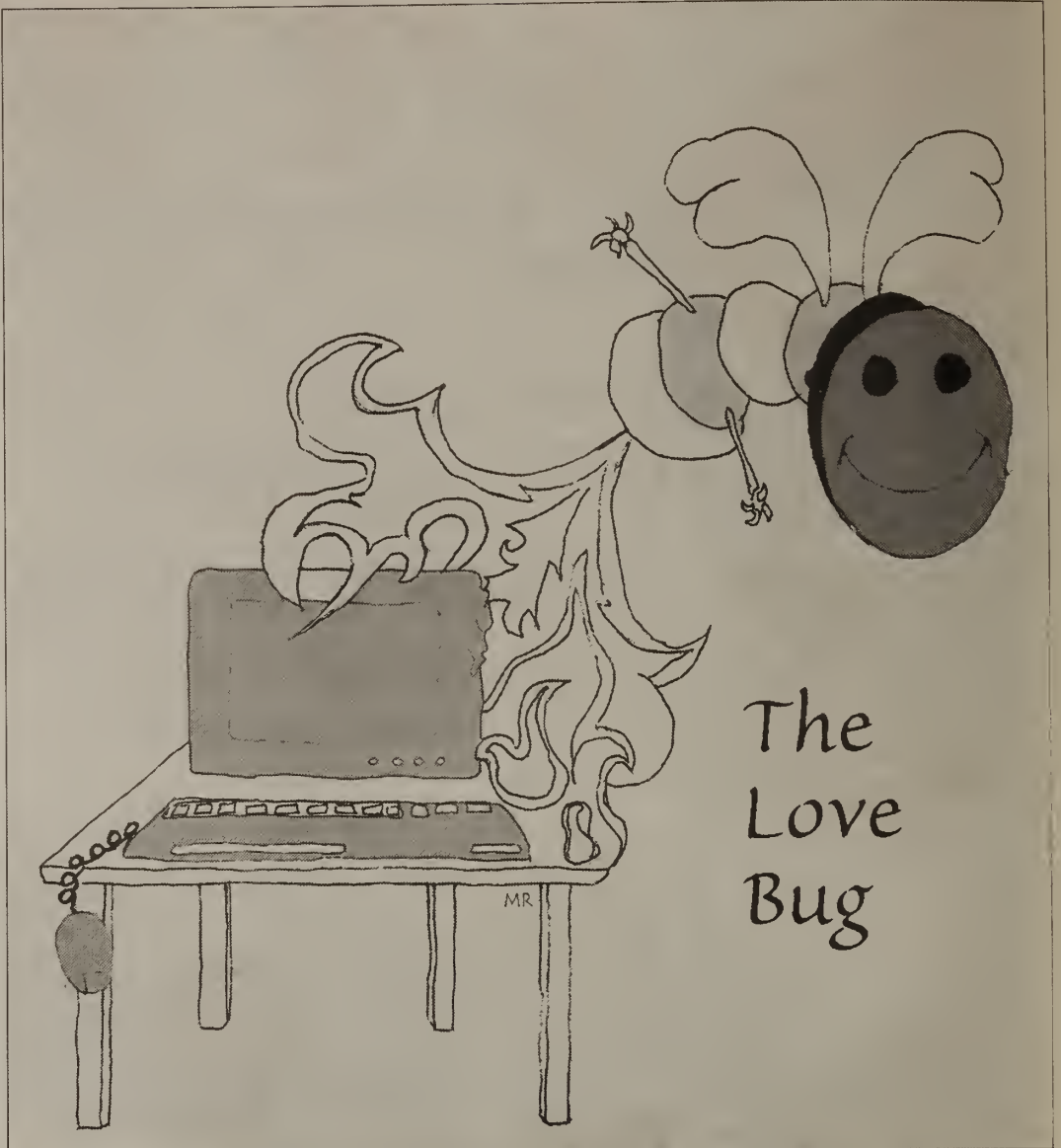
Unfortunately, while the government has made the possibility of new and improved facilities for education realistic, it has done nothing to bolster or support the learning that might happen within the brand new walls. No direct funding to program improvements have been uttered by those in government who speak of 15,000 new spots for eligible students at colleges and universities.

While there may be new desks and thousands of new students to fill them, it is quite unclear whether the money will exist to educate them.

Infrastructure alone will not save Ontario's post-secondary institutions. An increase in funding to programs, a tuition-cap and more money to bursaries and scholarships would help to lessen the burden on students and the colleges and universities they wish to attend.

With \$1 billion, according to a May 3 Toronto Star column by Michelle Landsburg, already ripped away from Ontario post-secondary institutions it is no wonder that the government is being forced to put money back in. It would be political suicide not to. While Eves touted the Budget 2000's education allotment as the "single largest in 30 years," one wonders if the contribution would have had to be so large if so much had not already been taken out of Ontario's education kitty.

One is forced to wonder when the day will come that university and college students join forces with elementary and primary school students to sell chocolate bars in order to assure money will be there to get the education they deserve — and paid for.



\$2 smoker tax not fair

I would not want to be a smoker in Waterloo Region right now. First off, it's bad enough that the region has passed an anti-smoking bill that won't let anyone smoke in public places, but now the federal government wants to raise taxes on cigarettes. They aren't talking about a five or 10 cents tax hike, they are talking more about a \$2 tax hike.

Smokers all over the country are rushing out to pick up cartons of Player's, DuMaurier, Matinee, Export 'A', Craven 'A' (Can't tell these cigarettes are Canadian, eh?) The price of a carton of cigarettes is expected to rise approximately \$12 to \$16 to about \$45 per carton.

Ouch!

Now, as a non-smoker, I think that both of these things are wonderful for my health and the health of everyone around. But on a non-selfish level I'm disgusted. Smoking is perfectly legal. Not taking into account age restrictions there is nothing about smoking that the gov-



Jes Brown

ernment doesn't sanction. It's not illegal to smoke in an outdoor public place. You can carry an open pack with you. You can smoke and drive.

So why doesn't the government start cracking down on something that's already illegal? Why not raise the price of beer? You can't drink in an outdoor public place. You can't walk around with an open bottle of alcohol in your hands. You definitely can't drive while drinking, or even after drinking.

So why is the government picking on the smokers?

Six years ago the federal government lowered the taxes on cigarettes to combat smuggling from the U.S. It worked, but then the rate of smokers when up, especially among teenagers who could now afford to buy their smokes.

Finance Minister Paul Martin wrote in a letter to provincial finance ministers obtained by Alain LaForest, a reporter for the French-language TVA network, that he wants to raise the taxes in the interest of the health of all Canadians.

Funny, though, since the taxes went down six years ago, the federal government alone has lost \$500 million in tax revenue. The government doesn't care about the health of all

Canadians. If they did they would spend more on health care.

The best way to improve health care for smokers in the long run would be to make cigarettes illegal. But that wouldn't make any money. In fact, with the short-term health care costs and the amount of smuggling that would happen, it would probably cost the government more money.

In the long term, it would be great for health care costs if smoking were illegal.

There are more than 12,000 cigarette-related deaths each year, according to the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term care Web site.

Also, the Web site states treating diseases caused by tobacco costs the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, and taxpayers, more than \$1 billion every year.

But the government is not interested in the health of all Canadians, it is interested in taxes.

I think the federal government is attacking smokers if it raises these taxes. It's not fair to the smokers.

If the government really wants to cut down on smoking, cigarettes should be made illegal. If not, just leave the smokers alone.

SPOKE

Keeping Conestoga College connected

SPOKE is published and produced weekly by the journalism students of Conestoga College.

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College posts hundreds of jobs

By James Campbell

Not only can the college educate you, but it may help you find a job.

Since September of last year, the college has posted about 4,000 jobs for students and graduates of Conestoga College and an average of 100 jobs are added every week.

There are also 1,400 jobs posted for the summer. Jobs posting can be found in room 2B04 and some are posted on the billboard outside the office.

Students can also leave their resume with student services and

under the resume referral program they'll forward your resume to any position within your field of study.

The service is free within the first six months after graduation and \$25 each following year.

Co-op manager Mary Wright said this program helps students find jobs and helps employers receive resumes from college graduates.

Student services also provides a free resume critiquing.

"If they want somebody to take a look at their resume and give some suggestions for where they can change it, we provide that."

Regular inspections keep Conestoga safe

By Sherri Osment

The offices and classrooms on the fourth floor exhibited no major safety problems after a recent inspection.

Regular safety inspections at the college are required by the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Inspections are conducted by members of the campus and college occupational health and safety committees.

Kim Radigan, health and safety co-ordinator, said yearly inspections are conducted for most of the offices and classrooms throughout the college and monthly inspections for areas that are considered more hazardous, such as machine shops, woodworking building and the journalism and graphic arts darkrooms.

The fourth floor inspection, which took place on May 4, was one of the yearly inspections and showed no serious concerns, Radigan said.

Some of the minor safety problems found on the fourth floor included a projector screen that had been taken down, some

removed light covers and torn carpeting.

The reports from these inspections are handed in to the physical resources department, which then decides what needs to be done.

General maintenance repairs are looked after by physical resources, while problems with program-specific equipment, such as darkroom enlargers, are taken care of by the program, Radigan said.

Any areas of concern are also discussed at bi-monthly safety meetings.

Radigan said usually major safety concerns get reported before an inspection. The inspections find minor things like missing ground plugs on items like overhead projectors.

During these inspections the committee looks closely for electrical hazards such as cracked electrical wires, Radigan said. They also take a copy of the last report that was done on that area to see if action was taken to clear up any safety hazards.

"These inspections are very effective and help to increase awareness of employees and students," Radigan said.

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Conestoga College

College council discusses goals for upcoming year

By Laura Czekaj

Conestoga College's college council is getting a makeover in preparation for the upcoming school year.

At the May 8 council meeting, the main item on the agenda was the discussion and evaluation of the council's goals for the year 2000-2001.

Greg Burns, vice-chair of the council and co-ordinator of the recreation and leisure services program, said during a recent interview that re-evaluating the council's goals is an annual event that was established by the council to define the content of the upcoming year's meetings.

"We want to make sure we don't wander from our goals," he said. "It's an opportunity for a cross-section of the college community to speak out."

According to its mandate, the council is made up of the college president, the vice-chair, members of faculty that represent each school, members of the support staff, including a representative from Doon campus, one from Stratford/Waterloo campuses and one from Guelph/Cambridge campuses, a representative from administration at each campus and a student representative.

Shari Dickson, recorder for the council and an assistant in the development office, said members of the council volunteer to be part of the council.

The council's goals are listed in two separate categories, active and passive.

Burns described the passive goals as the ones that the college will monitor, like ISO proceedings. The college is currently preparing to become certified by the International Standards Organization, which is an organization that sets documented and definable goals for businesses to follow.

On the other hand, active goals are goals that the council wants to evaluate and participate in. Burns said one of last year's active goals was to explore the college's views on academic conduct, such as cheating. Burns said the goals don't necessarily have to be academic and because they are submitted by everyone on the council the goals cover items that tend to affect everyone in the college.

As an example, he said that due to new provincial funding from the Strategic Skills Initiative Fund, 400 new computers will be introduced to the college. This concerns members of the council because of issues like who will receive the old computers freed up by the introduction of the new ones.

Items that made the passive list were international education requirements and applied degree proposals. Items that were listed as active goals were college/university relations and semester length.

Dickson said events that are constantly being worked on in the college, like ISO procedures, might

show up on the list of goals for a couple of years.

Burns said some items that were on last year's list that were repeated at the recent council meeting were the need for key performance indicator discussion and high school recruitment because of the college's preparations for 2004, when students from Grade 12 and OAC graduate at the same time due to the provincial government's decision to eliminate OAC; and academic conduct.

Burns said that even with time constraints, the council meets for two hours each month from September until May, the council manages to discuss about 80 per cent of the goals.

Burns said the council's purpose is to provide a forum between members and the president.

"It's an opportunity for staff to dialogue with the chief executive officer, in this case the president, and to learn information firsthand rather than through the grapevine," he said.

Another change to the council that was discussed at the meeting was Burns's term as vice-chair coming to a close as of May.

Burns has been vice-chair for three years, with the average term being two years. Dickson has issued memos to members of council to see if anyone would like to take over the position. She said that so far she has had no calls and Burns said if no one volunteers he would continue to serve.

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Book fair valuable to Conestoga teachers

By Jes Brown

Teachers from all Conestoga campuses came to the Doon campus May 9 to attend the 13th annual publisher's book fair.

"I think it was successful," said Jill Douglas, the director of the Learning Resource Centre who, together with LRC employee Sherri Gross, organized the event.

Douglas said the book fair gives publishers the chance to come with a lot of their books and be able to see a lot of faculty at one time.

"It gives the faculty an opportunity to be able to come to one spot and be able to see a lot of different titles from different publishers in one day," she said.

Jane Campbell, sales representative for southwestern Ontario for Oxford University Press Canada, said it makes the teacher's job easier to be able to see all the publishers at one time.

Ron Jenkins, materials management teacher from the school of

business, said he has found the book fair extremely valuable.

"Last year I picked up two books," he said. "We have since incorporated one of the books into the materials management program."

Margaret Burns, sales and editorial representative for Nelson Thomson Learning, said that the book fair is valuable for publishers as well as teachers. She said teachers get to learn about new technology in the computer end of things.

Steven Lemieux, sales and editorial representative for Pearson Education Canada, which encompasses Prentice Hall, Addison Wesley Longman, Allyn & Bacon and Benjamin Cummings, has been to four book fairs so far this year.

Lemieux said they are good because teachers get to see the books and hold them in their hands instead of just looking at them in a catalogue.

John Kroisenbrunner, a welding technology teacher from the

Guelph campus, said the offerings were excellent and there was a good variety.

"And for those books that they haven't got here they will send you a free sample, too," he added. "He requested several books for review to see if they fit his courses."

"We do this every year because we are anxious to update and upgrade our courses so students are in the position to learn the newest and best information available," he said.

Nursing teacher Marg Tupling said the publishers are generous letting the teachers preview publications.

"It's a nice easy way to review new books that are out and it gives us an opportunity to choose what's best for our students," she said.

Teachers coming to the book fair got to enter a draw to win prizes which included the Oxford Book of Stories by Canadian Women, two thermal coffee mugs, and the book Gardeners Art through the Ages.

There were 22 publisher representatives at the book fair this year, down two from last year.

Some of the representatives were from Harcourt Canada, Oxford University Press Canada, Pearson Education Canada and Nelson Thomson Limited.

Open sesame



Security Officer Cliff Laurin cuts the locks off lockers on May 9. He says he's found everything from old food to high powered slingshots and adult magazines. The property is held by security for about three months. (Photo by Laura Czekaj)

College closes for cleaning

By Julie Porter

Conestoga College was to close its doors for 24 hours on May 20 so that the school's electrical switch gear could be cleaned.

According to Tim Schill, chief engineer of physical resources, Conestoga's electrical high-voltage switch gear is cleaned once every three years.

"We give ourselves 24 hours to make sure that if a problem occurs

we can deal with it with plenty of time," said Schill.

Schill said that problems like bad connections and source and spring breaks are all things that they work to avoid.

The electrical equipment is located campus-wide and according to Schill, the power is cut right from the street.

There are switches in the recreation centre, the school's power house and woodworking centre.



Welding technology teacher John Kroisenbrunner looks over a possible text from the publishers bookfair (Photo by Jes Brown)

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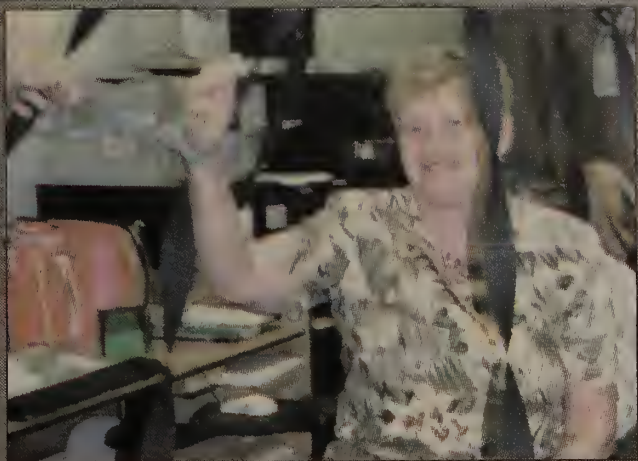
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Happy Birthday to you. . .



Doreen Marshall, a general clerk at Conestoga College, celebrates her 60th birthday in a cage of streamers. The celebration took place on May 9. (Photo by Sherri Osment)

Nursing students pinned for success

By Ray Bowe

Conestoga College's school of health sciences held its annual banquet May 12, including the presentation of registered nursing pins and class awards.

About 150 people attended the event held in the college's Blue Room cafeteria.

The class's valedictorian, Claire Walshe, touched on topics such as future success and how college is only the first hurdle students have to overcome.

Walshe also won the School of Health Sciences Management Committee Award for leadership, motivating others and being viewed as the leader of the class. The award was presented by Lois Gaspar, chair of health sciences. Walshe was also awarded the Myrtle Caswell Snider Bedside Nursing Award for the student who shows significant improvement.

Marg Tupling, nursing faculty, presented the Mary-Joe Halliwell Award for proficiency in nursing to Darlene Holden.

Shannon Gibson received the

Guelph General Hospital Auxiliary Award for highest academic average over the duration of the three-year program.

The Registered Nurses Association of Ontario - Wellington Chapter Award for highest academic standing in theory classes was presented to Anita Willms by faculty member Jackie Williamson.

The Lillian Brown Nursing Award for academic and clinical achievement was given to Linda Down.

The Robert Mutrie Chapter IODE Education Committee award in memory of Billie Ziegler was won by Shirley Foster and presented by Jeanette Linton, faculty member. The Grand River Hospital Award was given to Jennifer Lyne. Both awards are given to students who are interested in pursuing post-graduate studies.

After the awards ceremony, the graduating class was presented with its traditional nursing pin identifying the school of nursing. The class finished the evening by going out for supper and dancing.

Bags and wallets stolen from Spoke work lab

By Sherri Osment

Laura Czekaj, editor of Spoke, knows first-hand what it feels like to be the victim of a crime after her knapsack was taken from the Spoke newsroom on May 10.

Czekaj had \$20 in her wallet in the knapsack, but said she cared more about the loss of personal items like identification and photos.

"It's the hassle of it all," Czekaj said. "They steal my wallet and I have to pay to replace everything." There were two knapsacks belonging to Spoke staff taken from 4B13, a computer lab where Spoke pages are designed and produced.

Clifford Laurin, security supervisor, found a bag belonging to Mike Radatus, Spoke ad manager and production manager, in a third-floor stairwell.

The bag contained no valuables so nothing was taken.

A faculty member found Czekaj's knapsack, with her wallet removed, and turned it in to the security office.

Al Hunter, supervisor of security

services, said the best way to guard against this type of theft is to be alert and keep valuables within sight at all times, limiting the opportunity for people to steal personal items.

"If you see someone that doesn't look like they belong either contact security, (or if you are in a group) challenge them."

Al Hunter
security supervisor

Hunter said that usually wallets themselves are discarded because most often the person is looking for ready cash or bank cards.

"From time to time we'll find them ourselves on campus," said Hunter.

"We check garbage, check any place where a person might have thrown something."

A search of several garbage cans did not reveal Czekaj's wallet, and

it has still not been found.

When a person has their wallet stolen they should cancel all credit and bank cards immediately and also notify local police if a driver's licence is stolen, Hunter said.

Petty thefts on campus are not really a frequent event, Hunter said, but there was a period in the fall where there were similar occurrences.

Hunter said the fact that Conestoga is a relatively safe and secure environment makes people vulnerable because they don't remain alert.

Students and faculty should be aware if they see someone in an area that looks as if they don't belong, Hunter said, because often people who are stealing items on campus are not students.

"If you see someone that doesn't look like they belong either contact security, or (if you are in a group), challenge them," Hunter said.

The incident occurred between 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. on May 10. Anyone with information can contact the security office at 748-5220, extension 357, or the Spoke newsroom at extension 691.

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Students find work at job centre

By Laura Czekaj

What was referred to by employees as the "one-stop shop for all your employment needs" held its annual Employer Appreciation Day and open house on May 12.

Kitchener-Waterloo Career Connections, in partnership with Conestoga College and Lutherwood Community Opportunity Development Association, is a federal and provincial government initiative that provides young people with job opportunities, counselling and provides employers with a ready supply of workers.

The open house was the group's way of promoting hiring students to increase employment, according to Karen Brent, lead student employment officer for the KWCC. She said it is a way to draw attention from the community.

Conestoga's role in the KWCC is as a partner in the job connect program, which provides job training for youth. It is funded by the Ministry of Education and Training but Conestoga is given the money and the college then chooses to contribute to such programs as job connect and English as a second language study.

The program has a series of components to make getting employment easier.

Components that are part of job connect, which is staffed by four employees of Conestoga, are help with resumes, job skills to prepare for interviews and counselling. The program is geared towards people aged 16 to 24 who are not in school and are unemployed.

Andrea Leis, manager of job connect programs in Cambridge,



Jerrid Tremaine, a Wilfrid Laurier University student and one of the seven student employment officers for Kitchener-Waterloo Career Connections, explains the job board to Jerry Heer, (left) owner of Heer's Camera.
(Photo by Laura Czekaj)

Guelph and Stratford, which are all funded by the ministry in conjunction with Conestoga, said Conestoga does a lot in the community and the open house at KWCC is a good example of the college's community involvement.

She said this program, among other community projects endorsed by the college, falls under the school of access and preparatory studies.

Leis said the program has little to do with what the college is best known for, namely post-secondary education, and is just one of the ways the college helps out in community-oriented projects.

The open house was attended by 30 to 50 people. Presentations were made to honour employers, who were given a certificate and an engraved wooden pen that said "in appreciation."

Lil Singh, resource centre coordinator for KWCC, said during her speech at the open house that KWCC owes a lot to the help it receives from its partners, including the college.

KWCC's year-round student employment program offers job postings for businesses in Waterloo Region, computer access, including Internet, and photocopying and faxing. All services are free.

KWCC's Web sites currently have 325 jobs posted, according to Singh. Jobs on the sites range from factory work to landscaping to business jobs.

"We are the only resource other than universities and colleges for youth employment," she said.

Heather Chan, a Wilfrid Laurier University student, said this is her second year using KWCC's services to find a summer job.

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Newest sci-fi flick insults intelligence

By James Campbell

The movie Battlefield Earth
sucks.

I'll begin with a list of my pros and cons of this movie.

Pros: the previews before the movie, which included Shaft and Mission: Impossible 2, looked great. The theatre was air conditioned, and it was pretty hot the day I went so that's a definite pro.

Cons: I'm only allotted roughly 500 words for this article, which isn't enough to accurately describe how awful this movie, based on Church of Scientology leader L. Ron Hubbard's book.

Battlefield Earth is set in the year 3000. Roughly a thousand years earlier, a race of aliens known as Psychlos destroyed Earth in search of gold. Survivors joined together in tribes, and have become scavengers.

Fed up with living in fear, Jonnie Goodboy Tyler, played by Barry Pepper, better known as the sniper in *Saving Private Ryan*, leaves in search for the truth.

Armed with only courage and a nine-iron (yes, a golf club), Jonnie is captured and enslaved by the evil aliens.

Not wanting to go easily, he tries to escape. His resilience shows a bit of spunk in the eyes of Terl, an alien commander played by proclaimed Scientologist, John

Travolta. Terl decides to hook Jonnie up to a 'knowledge machine' to teach him how to mine gold. This machine also teaches Jonnie many other things, such as the Psychlos language and trigonometry.

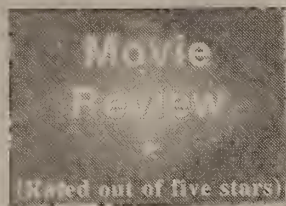
Anyway, to make a long story short, Jonnie bands together with the other slaves in hopes of taking back the earth.

That is the story line, which is the only reason for awarding the one star.

The special effects, which were hyped up to be the best ever, are nothing spectacular. The massive nine-foot aliens are kind of interesting, though Teri's sidekick, Ker, played by Forest Whitaker, looks like he should be in the Broadway play *Cats*.

Barry Pepper gets annoying with his never-give-up attitude and Travolta won't be receiving any Oscar nominations. Travolta's real-life wife, Kelly Preston, makes a cameo appearance and gives the best performance. In the commercial, she's the one with the long tongue.

I know it's a science fiction movie, with emphasis on fiction, but most of this movie is so unrealistic, it makes you feel like they're insulting your intelligence. I haven't read the book, but I can tell you that it doesn't have to be that good to be better than this movie.



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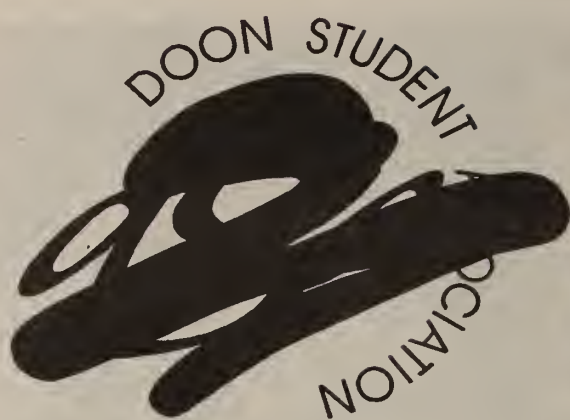
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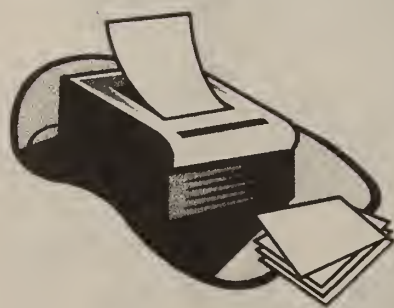
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